

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 17, 2011



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## **JAMAICA PLAIN WINS WALKERS' CHOICE AWARD FROM WALKBOSTON FOR FIRST THURSDAY PROGRAM**

**JP Centre/South Main Streets celebrates economic development program, now in its seventh year**

**BOSTON, MA**—JP Centre/South Main Streets ( <http://www.jpcentresouthmainstreets.org> ), has been awarded the annual Walkers' Choice Award from WalkBoston ( <http://walkboston.org> ) for its First Thursday program.

On the first Thursday of every month, Jamaica Plain businesses along Centre Street and South Streets stay open late so that local residents can shop, eat out, enjoy local arts and music events, and get some exercise.

JP Centre/South Main Streets is part of the citywide Boston Main Streets program ( <http://www.cityofboston.gov/mainstreets> ) started by Mayor Thomas M. Menino in 1995 to help build and revitalize neighborhood commercial districts through design, technical, and financial support. Today, there are 19 districts across Boston.

Creating a cultural evening out and driving more foot traffic to the business district were the main goals when the board members of JP Centre/South Main Streets created the First Thursday program in 2004. Over the past seven years it has grown from six businesses to more than 35 participating art galleries, restaurants, and retailers. JP Centre/South Main Streets recently announced that First Thursday has also been expanded to a year-long event.

From JP's hot, new tapas bar Tres Gatos at 470 Centre Street to UFORGE Gallery at 767 Centre Street, offering monthly assignments for all artists, Center/South Streets has become a monthly event that is a favorite evening out for many residents and businesses.

"We are really honored to have WalkBoston give us the Walkers' Choice Award," states JP Centre/South Main Streets' Executive Director Randace Moore, "First Thursday is a community-building event where the sidewalks are busy with foot traffic and more active than usual. Hundreds of JP residents and people from other Boston neighborhoods walk, browse shops, eat dinner or dessert out, and spend locally. The 'buy local' movement is very close to our hearts in Jamaica Plain and I know how much the local businesses all appreciate that dollars are being spent here."

"What Jamaica Plain has done with First Thursday is to give businesses and Boston residents another way to connect," states WalkBoston's Executive Director, Wendy Landman. "To walk the sidewalks and catch up with their neighbors, get some more exercise and truly build a stronger community through something as simple as strolling and walking. As one of the most livable neighborhoods in Boston, First Thursday is a great, simple idea that strengthens both communities and your leg muscles!"

A reception will be held at Jamaica Plain's new visual arts gallery, UFORGE Gallery ( <http://uforgegallery.com> ) to celebrate the award on Thursday, December 1, 2011.

For JP Centre/South Main Streets or First Thursday logos, please contact [charlie@layersmarketing.com](mailto:charlie@layersmarketing.com).

Wendy Landman and Randace Moore are available for interviews. To schedule an interview with Wendy Landman, contact [wlandman@walkboston.org](mailto:wlandman@walkboston.org) or 617.367.9255. To schedule an interview with Randace Moore, contact [charlie@layersmarketing.com](mailto:charlie@layersmarketing.com) or 617.233.6613.

#### **About JP Centre/South Main Streets**

Launched in 1995 as part of Mayor Thomas M. Menino's Boston Main Streets program, JP Centre/South Main Streets began with six businesses and currently has more than 35 participating art galleries, restaurants, and retailers. With the goals of strengthening existing businesses and attracting new businesses, JP Centre/South launched its First Thursday strolls in 2004 as a monthly event for an evening of art, music, shopping, and dining.

#### **About WalkBoston:**

WalkBoston is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to improving walking conditions in cities and towns across Massachusetts. Founded in 1990, our goal is to make walking and pedestrian needs a basic part of the transportation discussion. Our mission is to create and preserve safe walking environments that build vital communities. We promote walking for transportation, health and recreation through education and advocacy.

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